

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
SAJ-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 H-01 NSC-05 AID-05 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-03 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01
ARA-06 /113 W

-----291414Z 111142 /46

P R 291156Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8800
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 0737

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: UGT SECGEN REDONDO COMMENTS ON CURRENT SCENE

1. NICOLAS REDONDO, SECGEN OF THE SOCIALIST UGT AND MEMBER OF THE PSOE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, LUNCHEON WITH ME JANUARY 28. HIS COMMENTS, SUMMARIZED BELOW, TOUCHED ON BOTH POLITICAL AND LABOR MATTERS. HIS REMARKS ON THE TERRORISM AND AMNESTY ISSUES ARE INCLUDED IN OTHER REPORTING.

2. SUAREZ MEETING WITH PSOE'S FELIPE GONZALEZ AND VP LTGEN GUTIERREZ MELLADO. THIS MEETING EARLIER LAST WEEK HAD CONFIDENTIAL

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LARGELY CONCENTRATED ON LABOR QUESTIONS. SUAREZ HAD INDICATED THAT JUST AS THERE WAS A GOVT DISPOSITION TO BE ACCOMMODATING WITH RESPECT TO THE PSOE, THERE EXISTED A SIMILAR INCLINATION TOWARD THE UGT - WITH THE CAVEAT THAT THE LABOR FIELD WAS IF ANYTHING MORE SENSITIVE THAN THE POLITICAL WITH RESPECT TO RIGHTIST REACTIONS. WITH RESPECT TO THE PROBLEM OF UGT PATRIMONY CLAIMS FOR ASSETS CONFISCATED

AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, SUAREZ WAS INCLINED TO REJECT EITHER A 1) JURDICIAL OR AN 2) ADMINISTRATIVE SOLUTION. THE FIRST RISKED SETTING A PRECEDENT WHICH COULD OPEN THE DOOR TO CLAIMS BY 1936-VINTAGE LEFTIST POLITICAL GROUPS (POUM,ETC), NOT TO MENTION THE ADVERSE PUBLIC OPINION WHICH COULD BE GENERATED BY RIGHTWING ELEMENTS. AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION BY THE GOVT WAS EQUALLY UNSATISFACTORY FROM THE PUBLIC OPINION VIEW POINT. THAT LEFT, ACCORDING TO REDONDO, A 3) "POLITICAL" DECISION WHICH WOULD INEFFECT GRANT THE UGT CREDIT ON ITS CONFISCATED ASSETS AND FURTHER HAVE THE IMPORTANT ADVANTAGE OF SPEEDY ACTION. A FUTURE MEETING WITH SUAREZ WOULD GO INTO THIS PROBLEM FURTHER.

3. ELECTIONS. COMPLETION OF THE VOTER REGISTRY MAY BE DELAYED UNTIL LATE MAY, WHICH WAS HARDLY SATISFACTORY IF THE ELECTIONS WERE TO COME IN MID OR LATE JUNE AS HE ANTICIPATED. THE GOVT APPEARS TO BE LEANING TOWARD A PLAN WHICH WOULD REIMBURSE POLITICAL PARTIES FOR DETERMINED CAMPAIGN EXPENSES BASED UPON VOTER SUPPORT RECEIVED. SUCH A POST-ELECTION SCHEME WOULD OBLViate THE GRANTING OF ADVANCE CAMPAIGN FUNDS TO FRINGE PARTIES AND EXTREMIST GROUPS WHICH HAD NO HOPE OF WINNING ANY SEATS. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BENEFIT SUCH "RICH" GROUPS AS FRAGA'S POPULAR ALLIANCE WHO WOULD HAVE LITTLE TROUBLE IN RAISING ADVANCE CAMPAIGN MONEY. THE PSOE, THROUGH FOREIGN HELP (UNSPECIFIED, BUT GERMAN AND VENEZUELAN) ALREADY HAS PROVINCIAL CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS OPERATING IN SOME 23 OF THE 50 PROVINCES.

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4. PCE AND WORKERS' COMMISSIONS (SWC). IT WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY APPARENT TO THE UGT AND THE PSOE THAT THE COMMUNIST REALIZED THAT THEIR POLITICAL APPEAL WAS LIMITED, AND THAT THEY THEREFORE INTENDED TO CONCENTRATE ON THE TRADE UNION FRONT. IN THE ELECTIONS THE SWC WOULD RUN CANDIDATES (PRESUMABLY AS PART OF THE PCE APPROACH TO GETTING AROUND THE PROBLEM OF ITS PROHIBITION). THE UGT WAS NOT SURE WHETHER IT SHOULD PRESENT UGT CANDIDATES ON THE PSOE SLATE. IF THERE WAS ONE PROBLEM WHICH WORRIED THE UGT TODAY WITH RESPECT OF THE COMMUNISTS, IT WAS THE FEAR THAT THE PCE MIGHT GIVE THE WORD TO ITS SWC MILITANTS TO INFILTRATE THE UGT. WITH RESPECT TO THE COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP, PCE SECGEN SANTIAGO CARRILLO WAS CLEARLY THE BOSS, WITH OTHERS SUCH AS MARCELINO CAMACHO (HEAD OF SWC) HAVING TO TOE THE LINE. EVEN WITHIN THE SEC, CAMACHO IN REALITY PLAYED SECOND FIDDLE TO BOTH SARTORIUS AND ARIZA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MADRID 0737

6. TRADE UNIONISM. THE TRADE UNION BATTLE WAS SHAPING UP BETWEEN TWO MAIN CONTENDERS: THE UGT AND THE SWC. REDONDO REVIEWED FOR ME AS HE HAD FOR IRVING BROWN THE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF HIS UNION. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION REGARDING THE EXPECTED WEST GERMAN ASSISTANCE, HE SAID THEY HAD STILL RECEIVED NOTHING MORE THAN THE INITIAL TOKEN 50,000 DMKS GIVEN THEM LAST OCTOBER DURING THE DGB VISIT. A VISITING SWEDISH LO DELEGATION HAD JUST LEFT TOWN THAT DAY. WHILE THE SWEDES WERE SYMPATHETIC TO THEIR PROBLEMS, THE VERY NATURE OF THEIR DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES PREVENTED THEM FROM EXTENDING ANY SPEEDY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OVER AND ABOVE THEIR CURRENT MODEST CONTRIBUTIONS. TO HIGHLIGHT
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THE RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNIST SWC, REDONDO POINTED OUT THAT

THE LATTER HAD 32 LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICES IN THE FOUR BASQUE PROVINCES AND 8 IN GREATER MADRID, COMPARED TO THE UGT'S ONE IN MADRID AND A COUPLE IN THE BASQUE LAND.

7. THE ADVENT OF FREE TRADE UNIONISM IN SPAIN WAS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE, AND WOULD HAVE REPURCUSSIONS NOT ONLY IN EUROPE BUT ALSO IN LATIN AMERICA. JUST AS SUAREZ HOPED FOR GREATER SPANISH INFLUENCE IN LATIN AMERICA, SPANISH LABOR COULD ALSO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION REGARDING "MARXIST" TENDENCIES WITHIN THE UGT, REDONDO NOTED THAT ONE MUST DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN STATEMENTS MADE FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION WHICH - AFTER 40 YEARS OF REPRESSION - WERE BOUND TO BE STRONG, AND THE MORE PRACTICAL POLICIES WHICH WOULD BE FOLLOWED ONCE THE TRADE UNIONS WERE LEGALIZED. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE COULD BE NO TALK OF ANY SOCIAL PACT UNTIL LEGALIZATION, AFTER WHICH ONE COULD PERHAPS BE HAMMERED OUT WITH THE CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE MUST BE SACRIFICES BY MANAGEMENT AS WELL AS LABOR. MOREOVER THE UGT ITSELF HAD NOT REALLY THOUGHT THROUGH ITS OWN ATTITUDE TOWARD SUCH QUESTIONS AS NATIONALIZATION. WHILE THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE PSOE CONGRESS HAD TOUCHED ON THESE QUESTIONS, IT WAS QUITE ANOTHER MATTER TO DEFINE THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND ALL OF THIS WAS A LONG WAY OFF. IN ANY EVENT, IT WAS TO ERASE ANY MISCONCEPTIONS THAT MIGHT EXIST IN U.S. TRADE UNION CIRCLES REGARDING UGT POLITICAL TENDENCIES THAT REDONDO HOPED TO VISIT THE U.S. AT THE INVITATION OF THE AFL-CIO FOR A FRANK DISCUSSION OF THE SPANISH LABOR SCENE.

8. ATTITUDE TOWARD SUAREZ GOVERNMENT. REDONDO SPOKE WELL OF THE SUAREZ GOVERNMENT AND OF ITS EFFORTS TO MOVE THE COUNTRY FORWARD TOWARD DEMOCRACY. HE FELT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS DETERMINED TO DEAL ENERGETICALLY WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION AND NOT PERMIT ITSELF TO BE DIVERTED
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FROM ITS PRESENT COURSE. ON THE LABOR REFORM LAW, HE SAID THAT AS IT NOW STOOD, THERE WERE SEVERAL ASPECTS, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF SUSPENSION OF THE UNIONS, WHICH ARE NOT SATISFACTORY.

9. COMMENT. REDONDO IS AN ARTICULAT BUT LOW-KEY PERSON. HIS COMMENTS REFLECTED CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT AND ANALYSIS AS WELL AS AN APPRECIATION OF WHAT IS DO-ABLE AND NOT DO-ABLE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE FACTS OF LIFE TODAY IN SPAIN. HE IS CLEARLY AWARE OF THE VAST, BUT IMPORTANT, JOB WHICH LIES BEFORE THE UGT IF IT IS TO BE AN EFFECTIVE CONTENDER AGAINST THE SUPERIOR WEIGHT OF THE SWC. STABLER

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